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Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum**

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II. Replies received from Governments

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[2 July 2009]

Views of Cuba with regard to paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 63/50, entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation"

1. Cuba reiterates the criteria expressed in its prior responses to the Secretary-General in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

2. The complex international situation and the need for a collective response to the pressing problems besetting humanity confirm the importance of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation as the most viable option for addressing new threats in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the relevance of the United Nations General Assembly resolution on this topic.

3. The stalemate stemming from the lack of political will on the part of certain actors that has persisted for the past few years in the negotiations on the multilateral disarmament machinery increases the value of multilateralism. In the past, the concerted multilateral efforts of the international community have enabled the adoption and implementation of such important international instruments as the chemical and biological weapons conventions, in whose letter and spirit the respective States Parties have made a commitment to the total elimination of two categories of weapons of mass destruction.

4. Fortunately, there have been encouraging signs in the Conference on Disarmament, which recently adopted a programme of work after more than 10 years of failure to reach agreement.

5. The unilateral actions in the area of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control undertaken by some States Members of the United Nations to solve their security problems constitute a grave danger for international peace and security, and erode confidence in the international system, the foundations of the United Nations itself, and the credibility of multilateral agreements on disarmament.

6. The failure of military interventionism in Iraq, undertaken in clear defiance of international opinion, combined with its disastrous results, reaffirm the ineffectiveness of unilateralism in addressing the problems of the world today. Only by seeking negotiated solutions in a multilateral framework, and acknowledging the need to arrive at collective agreements, can international peace and security be safeguarded.

7. Practice has shown that the goals of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction cannot be achieved through unilateral measures, the development of strategic alliances to promote agreements negotiated outside internationally recognized multilateral frameworks, or by the use or threat of use of force. Multilateralism and peaceful solutions negotiated through

the organs established for such purposes and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations continue to be the only suitable way to settle disputes.

8. Once again it is necessary to reaffirm the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as of the determination to promote multilateralism as the basic principle of negotiations on this issue.

9. Cuba reaffirms its commitment to the promotion, preservation and strengthening of multilateralism and the multilateral decision-making process under the auspices of the United Nations, with strict adherence to its Charter and to international law, with the aim of creating a multipolar, just and equitable world order and world democratic governance, and not one based on the monopoly of a handful of wealthy nations.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]
[8 July 2009]

Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

1. The twenty-first century has changed the concept as well as the collective perception of international security. The confluence of new actors, challenges and threats that exacerbate the uncertainty and complexity of our times has placed security among the priorities of the international community.

2. Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) as well as the European Union Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and the European Security Strategy identify the proliferation of these types of weapons and their means of delivery as a threat to international peace and security. Spain is aware of this threat and is addressing the challenge through determined use of all available instruments and policies, giving preference to a multilateral approach.

3. The end of the Cold War, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the brutal attacks in New York, Madrid, London and elsewhere, as well as other events of the more recent past, have caused an evolution in the concept of security. Its content has changed. Concepts like deterrence and mutually assured destruction now have new substance and nuances.

4. These emerging realities require multilateral responses, political commitment and consultation if international peace and stability are substantively to be enhanced.

5. In a globalized and interdependent world, security is a value and aspiration of States, institutions, regions, communities and, above all, of citizens. Insecurity in our times originates not only from aggressor States, but also from non-State actors, terrorists and other criminal organizations. The deterioration of security hampers the development of peoples and nations, because violence denies the right of all people to progress; the advancement of human rights and democratic values is essential for the exercise of liberty.

6. The European Security Strategy identifies five major threats: the proliferation of weapons, especially those of mass destruction; terrorism; failed States; regional conflicts; and organized crime, now including networks for trafficking in persons, drugs, arms or other criminal purposes. It is needless to emphasize the effect of conventional arms and their role in feeding crises and violence. Everyone is aware of these threats, although they are often difficult to identify, isolate and combat, owing to their opacity and unconventional nature. Their complexity calls for integrated and coordinated solutions, i.e., joint efforts to eradicate them from the international community.

7. One of the main problems connected with proliferation is the existence of different treaties, agreements and control regimes, and the need to coordinate their implementation and criteria, which is not always an easy task. Although in principle these are all made up of like-minded countries, and the struggle against proliferation is increasingly becoming a goal of the international community, the fact that not all States are included in all of them, and that the criteria for admission and participation vary, creates problems that are sometimes difficult to resolve. Nevertheless, the advances and attitudinal changes that have taken place allow us some measure of optimism in this regard.

8. These reflections lead us to the questions of how to address these challenges, and what are the necessary and most effective ways of doing so. No doubt, what is needed is a multidisciplinary strategy that covers the fields of intergovernmental cooperation, the development of joint monitoring and tracking mechanisms, information exchange, and the establishment of new controls or updating earlier ones. Their scope involves national defences, the strengthening of multilateral instruments and organizations, cooperation in development and eradication of illicit trafficking, as well as other aspects.

9. We must provide effective solutions for combating international security risks. The most appropriate itinerary is political and diplomatic agreement, which must be reflected in legally binding conventions on disarmament and arms control.

10. Spain is committed to the multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament system; it has signed all the international agreements comprising the legal and normative framework of that system, and maintains an active, ambitious and consistent policy in support of its effectiveness and with the clear aspiration to achieve the universality of the major treaties in this area.

11. Moreover, Spain is strongly involved in building peace processes and in revitalizing and renewing the multilateral system in order to transform it into an instrument of peace and stability, advancement and progress. This requires arms reduction and control, and advocating support for arms non-proliferation and disarmament, as it is only thus that we can approach the dream of a peace that extends from intercultural security and coexistence to the balanced and sustainable development of the planet, as well as addressing the inequities of globalization.

12. In order to ensure that a disarmament and non-proliferation system functions effectively, it must be multilateral in nature and based on genuine compliance by States with their obligations. This multilateral approach, in addition to increasing the system's effectiveness, gives it important legitimacy.

13. In order to remain credible, the effectiveness of the international system needs to be improved, calling in turn for more cohesive instruments, greater political

commitment and more legally binding agreements. Regulations must require compliance with the obligations entered into by States and foster the promotion of rigorous and transparent verification systems that are accepted by all States. The capacity for consensus also needs to be broadened so as to establish legal frameworks conducive to the effective advancement of peace, security, cooperation and global progress. In this regard, it is vital to agree on an agenda for the Conference on Disarmament with a view to reactivating this important multilateral forum on disarmament and non-proliferation.

14. As a global as well as European actor, Spain must firmly commit itself to the reforms of multilateralism, which necessitates a greater engagement in the renewal of our international relations as well as of our mechanisms and institutions.

15. A responsible non-proliferation and disarmament policy requires the promotion of an effective multilateral system. To that end it will be necessary:

- To seek comprehensive political solutions that prevent, discourage or stop recourse to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or conventional weapons;
- To integrate policy on non-proliferation and disarmament into general security policy;
- To consider the possibility of including "non-proliferation clauses" in bilateral and regional relations;
- To promote the universality, defence and strengthening of international treaties, conventions, agreements and regimes;
- To strengthen the role of the United Nations Security Council;
- To promote the national implementation of international obligations;
- To improve the effectiveness of verification mechanisms through political, economic and technical support and to make them more intrusive;
- To strengthen systems of import and export control with respect to defence and dual-use materials and to increase the number of parties to such systems;
- To promote international information exchange;
- To strengthen technical assistance among States and cooperation for development;
- To promote legal and responsible trade in defence materials and dual-use technologies, and prevent illicit trafficking;
- To facilitate collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organizations and industries that share the same objective.

16. Only an effective multilateral system can successfully tackle the threat to international peace and security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in combination with other phenomena such as international terrorism, transnational organized crime, failed States, and regional conflicts.